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BY

HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW.



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# TALES OF A WAYSIDE INN.

PART THIRD.







## PRELUDE.

THE evening came ; the golden vane  
A moment in the sunset glanced,  
Then darkened, and then gleamed again,  
As from the east the moon advanced  
And touched it with a softer light ;  
While underneath, with flowing mane,  
Upon the sign the Red Horse pranced,  
And galloped forth into the night.

But brighter than the afternoon  
That followed the dark day of rain,  
And brighter than the golden vane  
That glistened in the rising moon,  
Within the ruddy firelight gleamed ;

And every separate window-pane,  
Backed by the outer darkness, showed  
A mirror, where the flamelets gleamed  
And flickered to and fro, and seemed  
A bonfire lighted in the road.

Amid the hospitable glow,  
Like an old actor on the stage,  
With the uncertain voice of age,  
The singing chimney chanted low  
The homely songs of long ago.

The voice that Ossian heard of yore,  
When midnight winds were in his hall;  
A ghostly and appealing call,  
A sound of days that are no more!  
And dark as Ossian sat the Jew,  
And listened to the sound, and knew  
The passing of the airy hosts,  
The gray and misty cloud of ghosts

In their interminable flight ;  
And listening muttered in his beard,  
With accent indistinct and weird,  
“ Who are ye, children of the Night ? ”

Beholding his mysterious face,  
“ Tell me,” the gay Sicilian said,  
“ Why was it that in breaking bread  
At supper, you bent down your head  
And, musing, paused a little space,  
As one who says a silent grace ? ”

The Jew replied, with solemn air,  
“ I said the Manichæan’s prayer.  
It was his faith, — perhaps is mine, —  
That life in all its forms is one,  
And that its secret conduits run  
Unseen, but in unbroken line,  
From the great fountain-head divine  
Through man and beast, through grain and  
grass.

Howe'er we struggle, strive, and cry,  
From death there can be no escape,  
And no escape from life, alas !  
Because we cannot die, but pass  
From one into another shape :  
It is but into life we die.

“ Therefore the Manichæan said  
This simple prayer on breaking bread,  
Lest he with hasty hand or knife  
Might wound the incarcerated life,  
The soul in things that we call dead :  
‘ I did not reap thee, did not bind thee,  
I did not thrash thee, did not grind thee,  
Nor did I in the oven bake thee !  
It was not I, it was another  
Did these things unto thee, O brother ;  
I only have thee, hold thee, break thee ! ’ ”

“ That birds have souls I can concede,”

The poet cried, with glowing cheeks ;  
“ The flocks that from their beds of reed  
Uprising north or southward fly,  
And flying write upon the sky  
The biforked letter of the Greeks,  
As hath been said by Rucellai ;  
All birds that sing or chirp or cry,  
Even those migratory bands,  
The minor poets of the air,  
The plover, peep, and sanderling,  
That hardly can be said to sing,  
But pipe along the barren sands, —  
All these have souls akin to ours ;  
So hath the lovely race of flowers :  
Thus much-I grant, but nothing more.  
The rusty hinges of a door  
Are not alive because they creak ;  
This chimney, with its dreary roar,  
These rattling windows, do not speak ! ”  
“ To me they speak,” the Jew replied ;

“ And in the sounds that sink and soar,  
I hear the voices of a tide  
That breaks upon an unknown shore ! ”

Here the Sicilian interfered :

“ That was your dream, then, as you dozed  
A moment since, with eyes half-closed,  
And murmured something in your beard.”  
The Hebrew smiled, and answered, “ Nay ;  
Not that, but something very near ;  
Like, and yet not the same, may seem  
The vision of my waking dream ;  
Before it wholly dies away,  
Listen to me, and you shall hear.”

## THE SPANISH JEW'S TALE.

AZRAEL.

KING SOLOMON, before his palace gate  
At evening, on the pavement tessellate  
Was walking with a stranger from the East,  
Arrayed in rich attire as for a feast,  
The mighty Runjeet-Sing, a learned man,  
And Rajah of the realms of Hindostan.  
And as they walked the guest became aware  
Of a white figure in the twilight air,  
Gazing intent, as one who with surprise  
His form and features seemed to recognize ;  
And in a whisper to the king he said :  
“ What is yon shape, that, pallid as the dead,  
Is watching me, as if he sought to trace  
In the dim light the features of my face ? ”

The king looked, and replied : " I know him well ;  
It is the Angel men call Azrael,  
'T is the Death Angel ; what hast thou to fear ? "  
And the guest answered : " Lest he should come  
near,  
And speak to me, and take away my breath !  
Save me from Azrael, save me from death !  
O king, that hast dominion o'er the wind,  
Bid it arise and bear me hence to Ind."

The king gazed upward at the cloudless sky,  
Whispered a word, and raised his hand on high,  
And lo ! the signet-ring of chrysoprase  
On his uplifted finger seemed to blaze  
With hidden fire, and rushing from the west  
There came a mighty wind, and seized the guest  
And lifted him from earth, and on they passed,  
His shining garments streaming in the blast,  
A silken banner o'er the walls upreared,  
A purple cloud, that gleamed and disappeared.



Then said the Angel, smiling: "If this man  
Be Rajah Runjeet-Sing of Hindostan,  
Thou hast done well in listening to his prayer;  
I was upon my way to seek him there."

## INTERLUDE.

“ O EDREHI, forbear to-night  
Your ghostly legends of affright,  
And let the Talmud rest in peace ;  
Spare us your dismal tales of death  
That almost take away one’s breath ;  
So doing, may your tribe increase.”

Thus the Sicilian said ; then went  
And on the spinet’s rattling keys  
Played Marianina, like a breeze  
From Naples and the Southern seas,  
That brings us the delicious scent  
Of citron and of orange trees,

And memories of soft days of ease  
At Capri and Amalfi spent.

“Not so,” the eager Poet said;  
“At least, not so before I tell  
The story of my Azrael,  
An angel mortal as ourselves,  
Which in an ancient tome I found  
Upon a convent’s dusty shelves,  
Chained with an iron chain, and bound  
In parchment, and with clasps of brass,  
Lest from its prison, some dark day,  
It might be stolen or steal away,  
While the good friars were singing mass.

“It is a tale of Charlemagne,  
When like a thunder-cloud, that lowers  
And sweeps from mountain-crest to coast,  
With lightning flaming through its showers,

He swept across the Lombard plain,  
Beleaguering with his warlike train  
Pavía, the country's pride and boast,  
The City of the Hundred Towers."

Thus heralded the tale began,  
And thus in sober measure ran.

## THE POET'S TALE.

### CHARLEMAGNE.

OLGER the Dane and Desiderio,  
King of the Lombards, on a lofty tower  
Stood gazing northward o'er the rolling plains,  
League after league of harvests, to the foot  
Of the snow-crested Alps, and saw approach  
A mighty army, thronging all the roads  
That led into the city. And the King  
Said unto Olger, who had passed his youth  
As hostage at the court of France, and knew  
The Emperor's form and face: "Is Charlemagne  
Among that host?" And Olger answered:  
"No."

And still the innumerable multitude  
Flowed onward and increased, until the King

Cried in amazement: "Surely Charlemagne  
Is coming in the midst of all these knights!"  
And Olger answered slowly: "No; not yet;  
He will not come so soon." Then much dis-  
turbed

King Desiderio asked: "What shall we do,  
If he approach with a still greater army?"  
And Olger answered: "When he shall appear,  
You will behold what manner of man he is;  
But what will then befall us I know not."

Then came the guard that never knew repose,  
The Paladins of France; and at the sight  
The Lombard King o'ercome with terror cried:  
"This must be Charlemagne!" and as before  
Did Olger answer: "No; not yet, not yet."

And then appeared in panoply complete  
The Bishops and the Abbots and the Priests  
Of the imperial chapel, and the Counts;

And Desiderio could no more endure  
The light of day, nor yet encounter death,  
But sobbed aloud and said : “ Let us go down  
And hide us in the bosom of the earth,  
Far from the sight and anger of a foe  
So terrible as this ! ” And Olger said :  
“ When you behold the harvests in the fields  
Shaking with fear, the Po and the Ticino  
Lashing the city walls with iron waves,  
Then may you know that Charlemagne is come.”  
And even as he spake, in the northwest,  
Lo ! there uprose a black and threatening cloud,  
Out of whose bosom flashed the light of arms  
Upon the people pent up in the city ;  
A light more terrible than any darkness ;  
And Charlemagne appeared ; — a Man of Iron !

His helmet was of iron, and his gloves  
Of iron, and his breastplate and his greaves  
And tassets were of iron, and his shield.

In his left hand he held an iron spear,  
In his right hand his sword invincible.  
The horse he rode on had the strength of iron,  
And color of iron. All who went before him,  
Beside him and behind him, his whole host,  
Were armed with iron, and their hearts within  
them

Were stronger than the armor that they wore.  
The fields and all the roads were filled with iron,  
And points of iron glistened in the sun  
And shed a terror through the city streets.

This at a single glance Olger the Dane  
Saw from the tower, and turning to the King  
Exclaimed in haste : " Behold ! this is the man  
You looked for with such eagerness ! " and then  
Fell as one dead at Desiderio's feet.



## INTERLUDE.

WELL pleased all listened to the tale,  
That drew, the Student said, its pith  
And marrow from the ancient myth  
Of some one with an iron flail;  
Or that portentous Man of Brass  
Hephæstus made in days of yore,  
Who stalked about the Cretan shore,  
And saw the ships appear and pass,  
And threw stones at the Argonauts,  
Being filled with indiscriminate ire  
That tangled and perplexed his thoughts;  
But, like a hospitable host,  
When strangers landed on the coast,  
Heated himself red-hot with fire,

And hugged them in his arms, and pressed  
Their bodies to his burning breast.

The Poet answered : “ No, not thus  
The legend rose ; it sprang at first  
Out of the hunger and the thirst  
In all men for the marvellous.  
And thus it filled and satisfied  
The imagination of mankind,  
And this ideal to the mind  
Was truer than historic fact.  
Fancy enlarged and multiplied  
The terrors of the awful name  
Of Charlemagne, till he became  
Armipotent in every act,  
And, clothed in mystery, appeared  
Not what men saw, but what they feared.”

The Theologian said : “ Perchance  
Your chronicler in writing this

Had in his mind the Anabasis,  
Where Xenophon describes the advance  
Of Artaxerxes to the fight ;  
At first the low gray cloud of dust,  
And then a blackness o'er the fields  
As of a passing thunder-gust,  
Then flash of brazen armor bright,  
And ranks of men, and spears up-thrust,  
Bowmen and troops with wicker shields,  
And cavalry equipped in white,  
And chariots ranged in front of these  
With scythes upon their axle-trees."

To this the Student answered : " Well,  
I also have a tale to tell  
Of Charlemagne ; a tale that throws  
A softer light, more tinged with rose,  
Than your grim apparition cast  
Upon the darkness of the past.

Listen, and hear in English rhyme  
What the good Monk of Lauresheim  
Gives as the gossip of his time,  
In mediæval Latin prose.”

## THE STUDENT'S TALE.

EMMA AND EGINHARD.

WHEN Alcuin taught the sons of Charlemagne,  
In the free schools of Aix, how kings should  
reign,

And with them taught the children of the poor  
How subjects should be patient and endure,  
He touched the lips of some, as best befit,  
With honey from the hives of Holy Writ ;  
Others intoxicated with the wine  
Of ancient history, sweet but less divine ;  
Some with the wholesome fruits of grammar  
fed ;

Others with mysteries of the stars o'erhead,  
That hang suspended in the vaulted sky  
Like lamps in some fair palace vast and high.

In sooth, it was a pleasant sight to see  
That Saxon monk, with hood and rosary,  
With inkhorn at his belt, and pen and book,  
And mingled love and reverence in his look,  
Or hear the cloister and the court repeat  
The measured footfalls of his sandaled feet,  
Or watch him with the pupils of his school,  
Gentle of speech, but absolute of rule.

Among them, always earliest in his place,  
Was Eginhard, a youth of Frankish race,  
Whose face was bright with flashes that forerun  
The splendors of a yet unrisen sun.  
To him all things were possible, and seemed  
Not what he had accomplished, but had dreamed,  
And what were tasks to others were his play,  
The pastime of an idle holiday.

Smaragdo, Abbot of St. Michael's, said,  
With many a shrug and shaking of the head,

Surely some demon must possess the lad,  
Who showed more wit than ever school-boy had,  
And learned his Trivium thus without the rod ;  
But Alcuin said it was the grace of God.

Thus he grew up, in Logic point-device,  
Perfect in Grammar, and in Rhetoric nice ;  
Science of Numbers, Geometric art,  
And lore of Stars, and Music knew by heart ;  
A Minnesinger, long before the times  
Of those who sang their love in Suabian rhymes.

The Emperor, when he heard this good report  
Of Eginhard much buzzed about the court,  
Said to himself, “ This stripling seems to be  
Purposely sent into the world for me ;  
He shall become my scribe, and shall be schooled  
In all the arts whereby the world is ruled.”  
Thus did the gentle Eginhard attain  
To honor in the court of Charlemagne ;

Became the sovereign's favorite, his right hand,  
So that his fame was great in all the land,  
And all men loved him for his modest grace  
And comeliness of figure and of face.  
An inmate of the palace, yet recluse,  
A man of books, yet sacred from abuse  
Among the armed knights with spur on heel,  
The tramp of horses and the clang of steel;  
And as the Emperor promised he was schooled  
In all the arts by which the world is ruled.  
But the one art supreme, whose law is fate,  
The Emperor never dreamed of till too late.

Home from her convent to the palace came  
The lovely Princess Emma, whose sweet name,  
Whispered by seneschal or sung by bard,  
Had often touched the soul of Eginhard.  
He saw her from his window, as in state  
She came, by knights attended through the gate;  
He saw her at the banquet of that day,



Fresh as the morn, and beautiful as May ;  
He saw her in the garden, as she strayed  
Among the flowers of summer with her maid,  
And said to him, " O Eginhard, disclose  
The meaning and the mystery of the rose " ;  
And trembling he made answer : " In good  
sooth,  
Its mystery is love, its meaning youth ! "

How can I tell the signals and the signs  
By which one heart another heart divines ?  
How can I tell the many thousand ways  
By which it keeps the secret it betrays ?

O mystery of love ! O strange romance !  
Among the Peers and Paladins of France,  
Shining in steel, and prancing on gay steeds,  
Noble by birth, yet nobler by great deeds,  
The Princess Emma had no words nor looks  
But for this clerk, this man of thought and books.

The summer passed, the autumn came ; the stalks  
Of lilies blackened in the garden walks ;  
The leaves fell, russet-golden and blood-red,  
Love-letters thought the poet fancy-led,  
Or Jove descending in a shower of gold  
Into the lap of Danae of old ;  
For poets cherish many a strange conceit,  
And love transmutes all nature by its heat.  
No more the garden lessons, nor the dark  
And hurried meetings in the twilight park ;  
But now the studious lamp, and the delights  
Of firesides in the silent winter nights,  
And watching from his window hour by hour  
The light that burned in Princess Emma's  
tower.

At length one night, while musing by the fire,  
O'ercome at last by his insane desire, —  
For what will reckless love not do and dare ? —  
He crossed the court, and climbed the winding  
stair,

With some feigned message in the Emperor's  
name ;

But when he to the lady's presence came  
He knelt down at her feet, until she laid  
Her hand upon him, like a naked blade,  
And whispered in his ear : " Arise, Sir Knight,  
To my heart's level, O my heart's delight."

And there he lingered till the crowing cock,  
The Alectryon of the farmyard and the flock,  
Sang his aubade with lusty voice and clear,  
To tell the sleeping world that dawn was near.  
And then they parted ; but at parting, lo !  
They saw the palace court-yard white with snow,  
And, placid as a nun, the moon on high  
Gazing from cloudy cloisters of the sky.  
" Alas ! " he said, " how hide the fatal line  
Of footprints leading from thy door to mine,  
And none returning ! " Ah, he little knew  
What woman's wit, when put to proof, can do !

That night the Emperor, sleepless with the cares  
And troubles that attend on state affairs,  
Had risen before the dawn, and musing gazed  
Into the silent night, as one amazed  
To see the calm that reigned o'er all supreme,  
When his own reign was but a troubled dream.  
The moon lit up the gables capped with snow,  
And the white roofs, and half the court below,  
And he beheld a form, that seemed to cower  
Beneath a burden, come from Emma's tower, —  
A woman, who upon her shoulders bore  
Clerk Eginhard to his own private door,  
And then returned in haste, but still essayed  
To tread the footprints she herself had made ;  
And as she passed across the lighted space,  
The Emperor saw his daughter Emma's face !

He started not ; he did not speak or moan,  
But seemed as one who hath been turned to  
stone ;

And stood there like a statue, nor awoke  
Out of his trance of pain, till morning broke,  
Till the stars faded, and the moon went down,  
And o'er the towers and steeples of the town  
Came the gray daylight, then the sun, who took  
The empire of the world with sovereign look,  
Suffusing with a soft and golden glow  
All the dead landscape in its shroud of snow,  
Touching with flame the tapering chapel spires,  
Windows and roofs, and smoke of household  
fires,

And kindling park and palace as he came ;  
The stork's nest on the chimney seemed in  
flame.

And thus he stood till Eginhard appeared,  
Demure and modest with his comely beard  
And flowing flaxen tresses, come to ask,  
As was his wont, the day's appointed task.  
The Emperor looked upon him with a smile,  
And gently said : " My son, wait yet awhile ;

This hour my council meets upon some great  
And very urgent business of the state.  
Come back within the hour. On thy return  
The work appointed for thee shalt thou learn."

Having dismissed this gallant Troubadour,  
He summoned straight his council, and secure  
And steadfast in his purpose, from the throne  
All the adventure of the night made known ;  
Then asked for sentence ; and with eager breath  
Some answered banishment, and others death.

Then spake the king : " Your sentence is not  
mine ;

Life is the gift of God, and is divine ;  
Nor from these palace walls shall one depart  
Who carries such a secret in his heart ;  
My better judgment points another way.  
Good Alcuin, I remember how one day  
When my Pepino asked you, ' What are men ? '

You wrote upon his tablets with your pen,  
'Guests of the grave and travellers that pass !'  
This being true of all men, we, alas !  
Being all fashioned of the self-same dust,  
Let us be merciful as well as just ;  
This passing traveller, who hath stolen away  
The brightest jewel of my crown to-day,  
Shall of himself the precious gem restore ;  
By giving it, I make it mine once more.  
Over those fatal footprints I will throw  
My ermine mantle like another snow."

Then Eginhard was summoned to the hall,  
And entered, and in presence of them all,  
The Emperor said : " My son, for thou to me  
Hast been a son, and evermore shalt be,  
Long hast thou served thy sovereign, and thy  
zeal

Pleads to me with importunate appeal,  
While I have been forgetful to requite

Thy service and affection as was right.  
But now the hour is come, when I, thy Lord,  
Will crown thy love with such supreme reward,  
A gift so precious kings have striven in vain  
To win it from the hands of Charlemagne."

Then sprang the portals of the chamber wide,  
And Princess Emma entered, in the pride  
Of birth and beauty, that in part o'ercame  
The conscious terror and the blush of shame.  
And the good Emperor rose up from his throne,  
And taking her white hand within his own  
Placed it in Eginhard's, and said: "My son,  
This is the gift thy constant zeal hath won;  
Thus I repay the royal debt I owe,  
And cover up the footprints in the snow."



## INTERLUDE.

THUS ran the Student's pleasant rhyme  
Of Eginhard and love and youth ;  
Some doubted its historic truth,  
But while they doubted, ne'ertheless  
Saw in it gleams of truthfulness,  
And thanked the Monk of Lauresheim.

This they discussed in various mood ;  
Then in the silence that ensued  
Was heard a sharp and sudden sound  
As of a bowstring snapped in air ;  
And the Musician with a bound  
Sprang up in terror from his chair,  
And for a moment listening stood,

Then strode across the room, and found  
His dear, his darling violin  
Still lying safe asleep within  
Its little cradle, like a child  
That gives a sudden cry of pain,  
And wakes to fall asleep again ;  
And as he looked at it and smiled,  
By the uncertain light beguiled,  
Despair ! two strings were broken in twain.

While all lamented and made moan,  
With many a sympathetic word  
As if the loss had been their own,  
Deeming the tones they might have heard  
Sweeter than they had heard before,  
They saw the Landlord at the door,  
The missing man, the portly Squire !  
He had not entered, but he stood  
With both arms full of seasoned wood,  
To feed the much-devouring fire,

That like a lion in a cage  
Lashed its long tail and roared with rage.

The missing man ! Ah, yes, they said,  
Missing, but whither had he fled ?  
Where had he hidden himself away ?  
No farther than the barn or shed ;  
He had not hidden himself, nor fled ;  
How should he pass the rainy day  
But in his barn with hens and hay,  
Or mending harness, cart, or sled ?  
Now, having come, he needs must stay  
And tell his tale as well as they.

The Landlord answered only : “ These  
Are logs from the dead apple-trees  
Of the old orchard planted here  
By the first Howe of Sudbury.  
Nor oak nor maple has so clear  
A flame, or burns so quietly,

Or leaves an ash so clean and white” ;  
Thinking by this to put aside  
The impending tale that terrified ;  
When suddenly, to his delight,  
The Theologian interposed,  
Saying that when the door was closed,  
And they had stopped that draft of cold,  
Unpleasant night air, he proposed  
To tell a tale world-wide apart  
From that the Student had just told ;  
World-wide apart, and yet akin,  
As showing that the human heart  
Beats on forever as of old,  
As well beneath the snow-white fold  
Of Quaker kerchief, as within  
Sendal or silk or cloth of gold,  
And without preface would begin.

And then the clamorous clock struck eight,  
Deliberate, with sonorous chime

Slow measuring out the march of time,  
Like some grave Consul of old Rome  
In Jupiter's temple driving home  
The nails that marked the year and date.  
Thus interrupted in his rhyme,  
The Theologian needs must wait;  
But quoted Horace, where he sings  
The dire Necessity of things,  
That drives into the roofs sublime  
Of new-built houses of the great  
The adamantine nails of Fate.

When ceased the little carillon  
To herald from its wooden tower  
The important transit of the hour,  
The Theologian hastened on,  
Content to be allowed at last  
To sing his Idyl of the Past.

## THE THEOLOGIAN'S TALE.

ELIZABETH.

### I.

“AH, how short are the days! How soon the  
night overtakes us!

In the old country the twilight is longer; but  
here in the forest

Suddenly comes the dark, with hardly a pause  
in its coming,

Hardly a moment between the two lights, the  
day and the lamplight;

Yet how grand is the winter! How spotless  
the snow is, and perfect!”

Thus spake Elizabeth Haddon at nightfall to  
Hannah the housemaid,

As in the farm-house kitchen, that served for  
kitchen and parlor,

By the window she sat with her work, and looked  
on a landscape

White as the great white sheet that Peter saw  
in his vision,

By the four corners let down and descending  
out of the heavens.

Covered with snow were the forests of pine, and  
the fields and the meadows.

Nothing was dark but the sky, and the distant  
Delaware flowing

Down from its native hills, a peaceful and boun-  
tiful river.

Then with a smile on her lips made answer  
Hannah the housemaid :

“ Beautiful winter ! yea, the winter is beautiful,  
surely,

If one could only walk like a fly with one's feet  
on the ceiling.

But the great Delaware river is not like the  
Thames, as we saw it

Out of our upper windows in Rotherhithe Street  
in the Borough,

Crowded with masts and sails of vessels coming  
and going ;

Here there is nothing but pines, with patches  
of snow on their branches.

There is snow in the air, and see ! it is fall-  
ing already ;

All the roads will be blocked, and I pity Joseph  
to-morrow,

Breaking his way through the drifts, with his  
sled and oxen ; and then, too,

How in all the world shall we get to Meeting  
on First-Day ? ”

But Elizabeth checked her, and answered,  
mildly reproving :

“ Surely the Lord will provide ; for unto the  
snow he sayeth,

Be thou on the earth, the good Lord sayeth ; he  
is it



Giveth snow like wool, like ashes scatters the  
hoar-frost.”

So she folded her work and laid it away in her  
basket.

Meanwhile Hannah the housemaid had closed  
and fastened the shutters,  
Spread the cloth, and lighted the lamp on the  
table, and placed there  
Plates and cups from the dresser, the brown rye  
loaf, and the butter  
Fresh from the dairy, and then, protecting her  
hand with a holder,  
Took from the crane in the chimney the steam-  
ing and simmering kettle,  
Poised it aloft in the air, and filled up the  
earthen teapot,  
Made in Delft, and adorned with quaint and  
wonderful figures.

Then Elizabeth said, "Lo! Joseph is long  
on his errand.  
I have sent him away with a hamper of food  
and of clothing  
For the poor in the village. A good lad and  
cheerful is Joseph;  
In the right place is his heart, and his hand is  
ready and willing."

Thus in praise of her servant she spake, and  
Hannah the housemaid  
Laughed with her eyes, as she listened, but gov-  
erned her tongue, and was silent,  
While her mistress went on: "The house is far  
from the village;  
We should be lonely here, were it not for Friends  
that in passing  
Sometimes tarry o'ernight, and make us glad  
by their coming."

Thereupon answered Hannah the housemaid,  
the thrifty, the frugal :

“ Yea, they come and they tarry, as if thy house  
were a tavern ;

Open to all are its doors, and they come and go  
like the pigeons

In and out of the holes of the pigeon-house over  
the hayloft,

Cooing and smoothing their feathers and bask-  
ing themselves in the sunshine.”

But in meekness of spirit, and calmly, Eliza-  
beth answered :

“ All I have is the Lord's, not mine to give or  
withhold it ;

I but distribute his gifts to the poor, and to  
those of his people

Who in journeyings often surrender their lives  
to his service.

His, not mine, are the gifts, and only so far can  
I make them

Mine, as in giving I add my heart to whatever  
is given.

Therefore my excellent father first built this  
house in the clearing ;

Though he came not himself, I came ; for the  
Lord was my guidance,

Leading me here for this service. We must  
not grudge, then, to others

Ever the cup of cold water, or crumbs that fall  
from our table."

Thus rebuked, for a season was silent the  
penitent housemaid ;

And Elizabeth said in tones even sweeter and  
softer :

" Dost thou remember, Hannah, the great May-  
Meeting in London,

When I was still a child, how we sat in the  
silent assembly,

Waiting upon the Lord in patient and passive  
submission ?

No one spake, till at length a young man, a  
stranger, John Estaugh,  
Moved by the Spirit, rose, as if he were John  
the Apostle,  
Speaking such words of power that they bowed  
our hearts, as a strong wind  
Bends the grass of the fields, or grain that is  
ripe for the sickle.  
Thoughts of him to-day have been oft borne  
inward upon me,  
Wherefore I do not know; but strong is the  
feeling within me  
That once more I shall see a face I have never  
forgotten."

## II.

E'en as she spake they heard the musical jangle  
of sleigh-bells,  
First far off, with a dreamy sound and faint in  
the distance,

Then growing nearer and louder, and turning  
    into the farmyard,  
Till it stopped at the door, with sudden creak-  
    ing of runners.  
Then there were voices heard as of two men  
    talking together,  
And to herself, as she listened, upbraiding said  
    Hannah the housemaid,  
“It is Joseph come back, and I wonder what  
    stranger is with him.”

Down from its nail she took and lighted the  
    great tin lantern  
Pierced with holes, and round, and roofed like  
    the top of a lighthouse,  
And went forth to receive the coming guest at  
    the doorway,  
Casting into the dark a network of glimmer and  
    shadow  
Over the falling snow, the yellow sleigh, and the  
    horses,

And the forms of men, snow-covered, looming  
gigantic.

Then giving Joseph the lantern, she entered  
the house with the stranger.

Youthful he was and tall, and his cheeks aglow  
with the night air ;

And as he entered, Elizabeth rose, and, going  
to meet him,

As if an unseen power had announced and pre-  
ceded his presence,

And he had come as one whose coming had long  
been expected,

Quietly gave him her hand, and said, "Thou  
art welcome, John Estaugh."

And the stranger replied, with staid and quiet  
behavior,

"Dost thou remember me still, Elizabeth? After  
so many

Years have passed, it seemeth a wonderful thing  
that I find thee.

Surely the hand of the Lord conducted me here  
to thy threshold.

For as I journeyed along, and pondered alone  
and in silence

On his ways, that are past finding out, I saw in  
the snow-mist,

Seemingly weary with travel, a wayfarer, who by  
the wayside

Paused and waited. Forthwith I remembered  
Queen Candace's eunuch,

How on the way that goes down from Jerusa-  
lem unto Gaza,

Reading Esaias the Prophet, he journeyed, and  
spake unto Philip,

Praying him to come up and sit in his chariot  
with him.

So I greeted the man, and he mounted the sledge  
beside me,

And as we talked on the way he told me of thee  
and thy homestead,



How, being led by the light of the Spirit, that  
never deceiveth,

Full of zeal for the work of the Lord, thou hadst  
come to this country.

And I remembered thy name, and thy father and  
mother in England,

And on my journey have stopped to see thee,  
Elizabeth Haddon,

Wishing to strengthen thy hand in the labors  
of love thou art doing.”

And Elizabeth answered with confident voice,  
and serenely

Looking into his face with her innocent eyes as  
she answered,

“ Surely the hand of the Lord is in it ; his Spirit  
hath led thee

Out of the darkness and storm to the light and  
peace of my fireside.”

Then, with stamping of feet, the door was  
opened, and Joseph  
Entered, bearing the lantern, and, carefully  
blowing the light out,  
Hung it up on its nail, and all sat down to their  
supper ;  
For underneath that roof was no distinction of  
persons,  
But one family only, one heart, one hearth, and  
one household.

When the supper was ended they drew their  
chairs to the fireplace,  
Spacious, open-hearted, profuse of flame and of  
firewood,  
Lord of forests unfelled, and not a gleaner of  
fagots,  
Spreading its arms to embrace with inexhausti-  
ble bounty  
All who fled from the cold, exultant, laughing  
at winter !

Only Hannah the housemaid was busy in clearing the table,  
Coming and going, and bustling about in closet and chamber.

Then Elizabeth told her story again to John Estaugh,  
Going far back to the past, to the early days of her childhood ;  
How she had waited and watched, in all her doubts and besetments  
Comforted with the extendings and holy, sweet inflowings  
Of the spirit of love, till the voice imperative sounded,  
And she obeyed the voice, and cast in her lot with her people  
Here in the desert land, and God would provide for the issue.

Meanwhile Joseph sat with folded hands, and  
demurely  
Listened, or seemed to listen, and in the silence  
that followed .  
Nothing was heard for a while but the step of  
Hannah the housemaid  
Walking the floor overhead, and setting the  
chambers in order.  
And Elizabeth said, with a smile of compassion,  
“ The maiden  
Hath a light heart in her breast, but her feet  
are heavy and awkward.”  
Inwardly Joseph laughed, but governed his  
tongue, and was silent.

Then came the hour of sleep, death's coun-  
terfeit, nightly rehearsal  
Of the great Silent Assembly, the Meeting of  
shadows, where no man

Speaketh, but all are still, and the peace and  
rest are unbroken !

Silently over that house the blessing of slumber  
descended.

But when the morning dawned, and the sun  
uprose in his splendor,

Breaking his way through clouds that encum-  
bered his path in the heavens,

Joseph was seen with his sled and oxen break-  
ing a pathway

Through the drifts of snow ; the horses already  
were harnessed,

And John Estaugh was standing and taking  
leave at the threshold,

Saying that he should return at the Meeting in  
May ; while above them

Hannah the housemaid, the homely, was look-  
ing out of the attic,

Laughing aloud at Joseph, then suddenly clos-  
ing the casement,

As the bird in a cuckoo-clock peeps out of its  
window,  
Then disappears again, and closes the shutter  
behind it.

## III.

Now was the winter gone, and the snow ; and  
Robin the Redbreast,  
Boasted on bush and tree it was he, it was he  
and no other  
That had covered with leaves the Babes in the  
Wood, and blithely  
All the birds sang with him, and little cared  
for his boasting,  
Or for his Babes in the Wood, or the Cruel  
Uncle, and only  
Sang for the mates they had chosen, and cared  
for the nests they were building.  
With them, but more sedately and meekly, Eliz-  
abeth Haddon

Sang in her inmost heart, but her lips were  
silent and songless.

Thus came the lovely spring with a rush of  
blossoms and music,  
Flooding the earth with flowers, and the air  
with melodies vernal.

Then it came to pass, one pleasant morning,  
that slowly  
Up the road there came a cavalcade, as of pil-  
grims,  
Men and women, wending their way to the  
Quarterly Meeting  
In the neighboring town ; and with them came  
riding John Estaugh.  
At Elizabeth's door they stopped to rest, and  
alighting  
Tasted the currant wine, and the bread of rye,  
and the honey  
Brought from the hives, that stood by the  
sunny wall of the garden ;

Then remounted their horses, refreshed, and  
continued their journey,

And Elizabeth with them, and Joseph, and Han-  
nah the housemaid.

But, as they started, Elizabeth lingered a lit-  
tle, and leaning

Over her horse's neck, in a whisper said to John  
Estaugh :

“ Tarry awhile behind, for I have something to  
tell thee,

Not to be spoken lightly, nor in the presence  
of others ;

Them it concerneth not, only thee and me it  
concerneth.”

And they rode slowly along through the woods,  
conversing together.

It was a pleasure to breathe the fragrant air of  
the forest ;

It was a pleasure to live on that bright and  
happy May morning !



Then Elizabeth said, though still with a certain reluctance,  
As if impelled to reveal a secret she fain would  
have guarded :  
“ I will no longer conceal what is laid upon me  
to tell thee ;  
I have received from the Lord a charge to love  
thee, John Estaugh.”

And John Estaugh made answer, surprised  
by the words she had spoken,  
“ Pleasant to me are thy converse, thy ways,  
thy meekness of spirit ;  
Pleasant thy frankness of speech, and thy soul's  
immaculate whiteness,  
Love without dissimulation, a holy and inward  
adorning.  
But I have yet no light to lead me, no voice to  
direct me.

When the Lord's work is done, and the toil and  
the labor completed  
He hath appointed to me, I will gather into the  
stillness  
Of my own heart awhile, and listen and wait  
for his guidance."

Then Elizabeth said, not troubled nor wound-  
ed in spirit,  
"So is it best, John Estaugh. We will not  
speak of it further.  
It hath been laid upon me to tell thee this, for  
to-morrow  
Thou art going away, across the sea, and I  
know not  
When I shall see thee more; but if the Lord  
hath decreed it,  
Thou wilt return again to seek me here and to  
find me."  
And they rode onward in silence, and entered  
the town with the others.

## IV.

Ships that pass in the night, and speak each  
other in passing,  
Only a signal shown and a distant voice in the  
darkness ;  
So on the ocean of life we pass and speak one  
another,  
Only a look and a voice, then darkness again  
and a silence.

Now went on as of old the quiet life of the  
homestead.  
Patient and unrepining Elizabeth labored, in  
all things  
Mindful not of herself, but bearing the burdens  
of others,  
Always thoughtful and kind and untroubled ;  
and Hannah the housemaid  
Diligent early and late, and rosy with washing  
and scouring,

Still as of old disparaged the eminent merits  
    of Joseph,  
And was at times reproved for her light and  
    frothy behavior,  
For her shy looks, and her careless words, and  
    her evil surmisings,  
Being pressed down somewhat, like a cart with  
    sheaves overladen,  
As she would sometimes say to Joseph, quoting  
    the Scriptures.

Meanwhile John Estaugh departed across the  
    sea, and departing  
Carried hid in his heart a secret sacred and  
    precious,  
Filling its chambers with fragrance, and seem-  
    ing to him in its sweetness  
Mary's ointment of spikenard, that filled all the  
    house with its odor.  
O lost days of delight, that are wasted in doubt-  
    ing and waiting !

O lost hours and days in which we might have  
been happy !

But the light shone at last, and guided his  
wavering footsteps,

And at last came the voice, imperative, ques-  
tionless, certain.

Then John Estaugh came back o'er the sea  
for the gift that was offered,  
Better than houses and lands, the gift of a  
woman's affection.

And on the First-Day that followed, he rose in  
the Silent Assembly,

Holding in his strong hand a hand that trem-  
bled a little,

Promising to be kind and true and faithful in  
all things.

Such were the marriage-rites of John and Eliz-  
abeth Estaugh.

And not otherwise Joseph, the honest, the  
diligent servant,  
Sped in his bashful wooing with homely Hannah,  
the housemaid ;  
For when he asked her the question, she answered, " Nay " ; and then added :  
" But thee may make believe, and see what will  
come of it, Joseph."

## INTERLUDE.

“ A PLEASANT and a winsome tale,”  
The Student said, “ though somewhat pale  
And quiet in its coloring,  
As if it caught its tone and air  
From the gray suits that Quakers wear ;  
Yet worthy of some German bard,  
Hebel, or Voss, or Eberhard,  
Who love of humble themes to sing,  
In humble verse ; but no more true  
Than was the tale I told to you.”

The Theologian made reply,  
And with some warmth, “ That I deny ;  
'T is no invention of my own,

But something well and widely known  
To readers of a riper age,  
Writ by the skilful hand that wrote  
The Indian tale of Hobomok,  
And Philothéa's classic page.  
I found it like a waif afloat,  
Or dulse uprooted from its rock,  
On the swift tides that ebb and flow  
In daily papers, and at flood  
Bear freighted vessels to and fro,  
But later, when the ebb is low,  
Leave a long waste of sand and mud."

"It matters little," quoth the Jew ;  
"The cloak of truth is lined with lies,  
Sayeth some proverb old and wise ;  
And Love is master of all arts,  
And puts it into human hearts  
The strangest things to say and do."



And here the controversy closed  
Abruptly, ere 't was well begun ;  
For the Sicilian interposed  
With, " Lordlings, listen, every one  
That listen may, unto a tale  
That 's merrier than the nightingale ;  
A tale that cannot boast, forsooth,  
A single rag or shred of truth ;  
That does not leave the mind in doubt  
As to the with it or without ;  
A naked falsehood and absurd  
As mortal ever told or heard.  
Therefore I tell it ; or, maybe,  
Simply because it pleases me."

## THE SICILIAN'S TALE.

### THE MONK OF CASAL-MAGGIORE.

ONCE on a time, some centuries ago,  
In the hot sunshine two Franciscan friars  
Wended their weary way with footsteps slow  
Back to their convent, whose white walls  
and spires  
Gleamed on the hillside like a patch of snow ;  
Covered with dust they were, and torn by  
briers,  
And bore like sumpter-mules upon their backs  
The badge of poverty, their beggar's sacks.

The first was Brother Anthony, a spare  
And silent man, with pallid cheeks and thin,  
Much given to vigils, penance, fasting, prayer,  
Solemn and gray, and worn with discipline,

As if his body but white ashes were,  
    Heaped on the living coals that glowed within;  
A simple monk, like many of his day,  
Whose instinct was to listen and obey.

A different man was Brother Timothy,  
    Of larger mould and of a coarser paste;  
A rubicund and stalwart monk was he,  
    Broad in the shoulders, broader in the waist.  
Who often filled the dull refectory  
    With noise by which the convent was disgraced,  
But to the mass-book gave but little heed,  
By reason he had never learned to read.

Now, as they passed the outskirts of a wood,  
    They saw, with mingled pleasure and surprise,  
Fast tethered to a tree an ass, that stood  
    Lazily winking his large, limpid eyes.  
The farmer Gilbert of that neighborhood  
    His owner was, who, looking for supplies

Of fagots, deeper in the wood had strayed,  
Leaving his beast to ponder in the shade.

As soon as Brother Timothy espied

The patient animal, he said : “ Good-lack !  
Thus for our needs doth Providence provide ;  
We ’ll lay our wallets on the creature’s back.”  
This being done, he leisurely untied

From head and neck the halter of the jack,  
And put it round his own, and to the tree  
Stood tethered fast as if the ass were he.

And, bursting forth into a merry laugh,

He cried to Brother Anthony : “ Away !  
And drive the ass before you with your staff ;  
And when you reach the convent you may say  
You left me at a farm, half tired and half  
Ill with a fever, for a night and day,  
And that the farmer lent this ass to bear  
Our wallets, that are heavy with good fare.”

Now Brother Anthony, who knew the pranks  
Of Brother Timothy, would not persuade  
Or reason with him on his quirks and cranks,  
But, being obedient, silently obeyed ;  
And, smiting with his staff the ass's flanks,  
Drove him before him over hill and glade,  
Safe with his provend to the convent gate,  
Leaving poor Brother Timothy to his fate.

Then Gilbert, laden with fagots for his fire,  
Forth issued from the wood, and stood aghast  
To see the ponderous body of the friar  
Standing where he had left his donkey last.  
Trembling he stood, and dared not venture  
nigher,  
But stared, and gaped, and crossed himself  
full fast ;  
For, being credulous and of little wit,  
He thought it was some demon from the pit.

While speechless and bewildered thus he gazed,  
And dropped his load of fagots on the ground,  
Quoth Brother Timothy : “ Be not amazed  
That where you left a donkey should be found  
A poor Franciscan friar, half-starved and crazed,  
Standing demure and with a halter bound ;  
But set me free, and hear the piteous story  
Of Brother Timothy of Casal-Maggiore.

“ I am a sinful man, although you see  
I wear the consecrated cowl and cape ;  
You never owned an ass, but you owned me,  
Changed and transformed from my own natural shape  
All for the deadly sin of gluttony,  
From which I could not otherwise escape,  
Than by this penance, dieting on grass,  
And being worked and beaten as an ass.

“ Think of the ignominy I endured ;  
Think of the miserable life I led,

- The toil and blows to which I was inured,  
My wretched lodging in a windy shed,  
My scanty fare so grudgingly procured,  
The damp and musty straw that formed my  
bed !

But, having done this penance for my sins,  
My life as man and monk again begins."

The simple Gilbert, hearing words like these,  
Was conscience-stricken; and fell down apace  
Before the friar upon his bended knees,  
And with a suppliant voice implored his  
grace ;

And the good monk, now very much at ease,  
Granted him pardon with a smiling face,  
Nor could refuse to be that night his guest,  
It being late, and he in need of rest.

Upon a hillside, where the olive thrives,  
With figures painted on its whitewashed  
walls,

The cottage stood ; and near the humming hives  
    Made murmurs as of far-off waterfalls ;  
A place where those who love secluded lives  
    Might live content, and, free from noise and  
        brawls,  
Like Claudian's Old Man of Verona here  
Measure by fruits the slow-revolving year.

And, coming to this cottage of content,  
    They found his children, and the buxom  
        wench  
His wife, Dame Cicely, and his father, bent  
    With years and labor, seated on a bench,  
Repeating over some obscure event  
    In the old wars of Milanese and French ;  
All welcomed the Franciscan, with a sense  
Of sacred awe and humble reverence.

When Gilbert told them what had come to pass,  
    How beyond question, cavil, or surmise,



Good Brother Timothy had been their ass,  
You should have seen the wonder in their  
eyes ;

You should have heard them cry, " Alas ! alas ! "

Have heard their lamentations and their  
sighs !

For all believed the story, and began  
To see a saint in this afflicted man.

Forthwith there was prepared a grand repast,

To satisfy the craving of the friar

After so rigid and prolonged a fast ;

The bustling housewife stirred the kitchen  
fire ;

Then her two favorite pullets and her last

Were put to death, at her express desire,

And served up with a salad in a bowl,

And flasks of country wine to crown the whole.

It would not be believed should I repeat

How hungry Brother Timothy appeared ;

It was a pleasure but to see him eat,  
His white teeth flashing through his russet  
beard,  
His face aglow and flushed with wine and meat,  
His roguish eyes that rolled and laughed and  
leered !  
Lord ! how he drank the blood-red country wine  
As if the village vintage were divine !

And all the while he talked without surcease,  
And told his merry tales with jovial glee  
That never flagged, but rather did increase,  
And laughed aloud as if insane were he,  
And wagged his red beard, matted like a fleece,  
And cast such glances at Dame Cicely  
That Gilbert now grew angry with his guest,  
And thus in words his rising wrath expressed.

“ Good father,” said he, “ easily we see  
How needful in some persons, and how right,

Mortification of the flesh may be.

The indulgence you have given it to-night,  
After long penance, clearly proves to me

Your strength against temptation is but  
slight,

And shows the dreadful peril you are in  
Of a relapse into your deadly sin.

“To-morrow morning, with the rising sun,

Go back unto your convent, nor refrain  
From fasting and from scourging, for you run  
Great danger to become an ass again,  
Since monkish flesh and asinine are one ;

Therefore be wise, nor longer here remain,  
Unless you wish the scourge should be applied  
By other hands, that will not spare your hide.”

When this the monk had heard, his color fled

And then returned, like lightning in the air,  
Till he was all one blush from foot to head,  
And even the bald spot in his russet hair

Turned from its usual pallor to bright red !

The old man was asleep upon his chair.

Then all retired, and sank into the deep

And helpless imbecility of sleep.

They slept until the dawn of day drew near,

Till the cock should have crowed, but did not  
crow,

For they had slain the shining chanticleer

And eaten him for supper, as you know.

The monk was up betimes and of good cheer,

And, having breakfasted, made haste to go,

As if he heard the distant matin bell,

And had but little time to say farewell.

Fresh was the morning as the breath of kine ;

Odors of herbs commingled with the sweet

Balsamic exhalations of the pine ;

A haze was in the air presaging heat ;

Uprose the sun above the Apennine,

And all the misty valleys at its feet

Were full of the delirious song of birds,  
Voices of men, and bells, and low of herds.

All this to Brother Timothy was naught ;

He did not care for scenery, nor here  
His busy fancy found the thing it sought ;

But when he saw the convent walls appear,  
And smoke from kitchen chimneys upward  
caught

And whirled aloft into the atmosphere,  
He quickened his slow footsteps, like a beast  
That scents the stable a league off at least.

And as he entered through the convent gate

He saw there in the court the ass, who stood  
Twirling his ears about, and seemed to wait,

Just as he found him waiting in the wood ;  
And told the Prior that, to alleviate

The daily labors of the brotherhood,  
The owner, being a man of means and thrift,  
Bestowed him on the convent as a gift.

And thereupon the Prior for many days  
    Revolved this serious matter in his mind,  
And turned it over many different ways,  
    Hoping that some safe issue he might find ;  
But stood in fear of what the world would say,  
    If he accepted presents of this kind,  
Employing beasts of burden for the packs  
That lazy monks should carry on their backs.

Then, to avoid all scandal of the sort,  
    And stop the mouth of cavil, he decreed  
That he would cut the tedious matter short,  
    And sell the ass with all convenient speed,  
Thus saving the expense of his support,  
    And hoarding something for a time of need.  
So he despatched him to the neighboring Fair,  
And freed himself from cumber and from care.

It happened now by chance, as some might say,  
    Others perhaps would call it destiny,

Gilbert was at the Fair ; and heard a bray,  
And nearer came, and saw that it was he,  
And whispered in his ear, “ Ah, lackaday !  
Good father, the rebellious flesh, I see,  
Has changed you back into an ass again,  
And all my admonitions were in vain.”

The ass, who felt this breathing in his ear,  
Did not turn round to look, but shook his  
head,  
As if he were not pleased these words to hear,  
And contradicted all that had been said.  
And this made Gilbert cry in voice more clear,  
“ I know you well ; your hair is russet-red ;  
Do not deny it ; for you are the same  
Franciscan friar, and Timothy by name.”

The ass, though now the secret had come out,  
Was obstinate, and shook his head again ;  
Until a crowd was gathered round about  
To hear this dialogue between the twain ;

And raised their voices in a noisy shout

When Gilbert tried to make the matter plain,  
And flouted him and mocked him all day long  
With laughter and with jibes and scraps of song.

“If this be Brother Timothy,” they cried,  
“Buy him, and feed him on the tenderest  
grass ;

Thou canst not do too much for one so tried

As to be twice transformed into an ass.”

So simple Gilbert bought him, and untied

His halter, and o’er mountain and morass  
He led him homeward, talking as he went  
Of good behavior and a mind content.

The children saw them coming, and advanced,  
Shouting with joy, and hung about his  
neck, —

Not Gilbert’s, but the ass’s, — round him danced,  
And wove green garlands wherewithal to deck



His sacred person ; for again it chanced  
Their childish feelings, without rein or check,  
Could not discriminate in any way  
A donkey from a friar of Orders Gray.

“ O Brother Timothy,” the children said,  
“ You have come back to us just as before ;  
We were afraid, and thought that you were  
dead,

And we should never see you any more.”  
And then they kissed the white star on his head,  
That like a birth-mark or a badge he wore,  
And patted him upon the neck and face,  
And said a thousand things with childish grace.

Thenceforward and forever he was known  
As Brother Timothy, and led away  
A life of luxury, till he had grown  
Ungrateful, being stuffed with corn and hay,  
And very vicious. Then in angry tone,  
Rousing himself, poor Gilbert said one day,

“ When simple kindness is misunderstood  
A little flagellation may do good.”

His many vices need not here be told ;  
Among them was a habit that he had  
Of flinging up his heels at young and old,  
Breaking his halter, running off like mad  
O'er pasture-lands and meadow, wood and  
wold,

And other misdemeanors quite as bad ;  
But worst of all was breaking from his shed  
At night, and ravaging the cabbage-bed.

So Brother Timothy went back once more  
To his old life of labor and distress ;  
Was beaten worse than he had been before ;  
And now, instead of comfort and caress,  
Came labors manifold and trials sore ;  
And as his toils increased his food grew less,  
Until at last the great consoler, Death,  
Ended his many sufferings with his breath.

Great was the lamentation when he died ;  
And mainly that he died impenitent ;  
Dame Cicely bewailed, the children cried,  
The old man still remembered the event  
In the French war, and Gilbert magnified  
His many virtues, as he came and went,  
And said : “ Heaven pardon Brother Timothy,  
And keep us from the sin of gluttony.”

## INTERLUDE.

“SIGNOR LUIGI,” said the Jêw,  
When the Sicilian’s tale was told,  
“The were-wolf is a legend old,  
But the were-ass is something new,  
And yet for one I think it true.  
The days of wonder have not ceased ;  
If there are beasts in forms of men,  
As sure it happens now and then,  
Why may not man become a beast,  
In way of punishment at least ?

“But this I will not now discuss ;  
I leave the theme, that we may thus  
Remain within the realm of song.

The story that I told before,  
Though not acceptable to all,  
At least you did not find too long.  
I beg you, let me try again,  
With something in a different vein,  
Before you bid the curtain fall.  
Meanwhile keep watch upon the door,  
Nor let the Landlord leave his chair,  
Lest he should vanish into air,  
And thus elude our search once more."

Thus saying, from his lips he blew  
A little cloud of perfumed breath,  
And then, as if it were a clew  
To lead his footsteps safely through,  
Began his tale as followeth.

## THE SPANISH JEW'S SECOND TALE.

### SCANDERBEG.

THE battle is fought and won  
By King Ladislaus the Hun,  
In fire of hell and death's frost,  
On the day of Pentecost.  
And in rout before his path  
From the field of battle red  
Flee all that are not dead  
Of the army of Amurath.

In the darkness of the night  
Iskander, the pride and boast  
Of that mighty Othman host,  
With his routed Turks, takes flight  
From the battle fought and lost

On the day of Pentecost ;  
Leaving behind him dead  
The army of Amurath,  
The vanguard as it led,  
The rearguard as it fled,  
Mown down in the bloody swath  
Of the battle's aftermath.

But he cared not for Hospodars,  
Nor for Baron or Voivode,  
As on through the night he rode  
And gazed at the fateful stars,  
That were shining overhead ;  
But smote his steed with his staff,  
And smiled to himself, and said :  
“ This is the time to laugh.”

In the middle of the night,  
In a halt of the hurrying flight,  
There came a Scribe of the King

Wearing his signet ring,  
And said in a voice severe :  
“ This is the first dark blot  
On thy name, George Castriot !  
Alas ! why art thou here,  
And the army of Amurath slain,  
And left on the battle plain ? ”

And Iskander answered and said :  
“ They lie on the bloody sod  
By the hoofs of horses trod ;  
But this was the decree  
Of the watchers overhead ;  
For the war belongeth to God,  
And in battle who are we,  
Who are we, that shall withstand  
The wind of his lifted hand ? ”

Then he bade them bind with chains  
This man of books and brains ;



And the Scribe said : " What misdeed  
Have I done, that without need,  
Thou doest to me this thing ? "

And Iskander answering  
Said unto him : " Not one  
Misdeed to me hast thou done ;  
But for fear that thou shouldst run  
And hide thyself from me,  
Have I done this unto thee.

" Now write me a writing, O Scribe,  
And a blessing be on thy tribe !  
A writing sealed with thy ring,  
To King Amurath's Pasha  
In the city of Croia,  
The city moated and walled,  
That he surrender the same  
In the name of my master, the King ;  
For what is writ in his name  
Can never be recalled."

And the Scribe bowed low in dread,  
And unto Iskander said :  
“ Allah is great and just,  
But we are as ashes and dust ;  
How shall I do this thing,  
When I know that my guilty head  
Will be forfeit to the King ? ”

Then swift as a shooting star  
The curved and shining blade  
Of Iskander's scimeter  
From its sheath, with jewels bright,  
Shot, as he thundered : “ Write ! ”  
And the trembling Scribe obeyed,  
And wrote in the fitful glare  
Of the bivouac fire apart,  
With the chill of the midnight air  
On his forehead white and bare,  
And the chill of death in his heart.

Then again Iskander cried :  
“ Now follow whither I ride,  
For here thou must not stay.  
Thou shalt be as my dearest friend,  
And honors without end  
Shall surround thee on every side,  
And attend thee night and day.”  
But the sullen Scribe replied :  
“ Our pathways here divide ;  
Mine leadeth not thy way.”

And even as he spoke  
Fell a sudden scimeter stroke,  
When no one else was near ;  
And the Scribe sank to the ground,  
As a stone, pushed from the brink  
Of a black pool, might sink  
With a sob and disappear ;  
And no one saw the deed ;  
And in the stillness around

No sound was heard but the sound  
Of the hoofs of Iskander's steed,  
As forward he sprang with a bound.

Then onward he rode and afar,  
With scarce three hundred men,  
Through river and forest and fen,  
O'er the mountains of Argentar;  
And his heart was merry within,  
When he crossed the river Drin,  
And saw in the gleam of the morn  
The White Castle Ak-Hissar,  
The city Croia called,  
The city moated and walled,  
The city where he was born, —  
And above it the morning star.

Then his trumpeters in the van  
On their silver bugles blew,  
And in crowds about him ran

Albanian and Turkoman,  
That the sound together drew.  
And he feasted with his friends,  
And when they were warm with wine,  
He said : " O friends of mine,  
Behold what fortune sends,  
And what the fates design !  
King Amurath commands  
That my father's wide domain,  
This city and all its lands,  
Shall be given to me again."

Then to the Castle White  
He rode in regal state,  
And entered in at the gate  
In all his arms bedight,  
And gave to the Pasha  
Who ruled in Croia  
The writing of the King,  
Sealed with his signet ring.

And the Pasha bowed his head,  
And after a silence said :  
“ Allah is just and great !  
I yield to the will divine,  
The city and lands are thine ;  
Who shall contend with fate ? ”

Anon from the castle walls  
The crescent banner falls,  
And the crowd beholds instead,  
Like a portent in the sky,  
Iskander's banner fly,  
The Black Eagle with double head ;  
And a shout ascends on high,  
For men's souls are tired of the Turks,  
And their wicked ways and works,  
That have made of Ak-Hissar  
A city of the plague ;  
And the loud, exultant cry  
That echoes wide and far  
Is : “ Long live Scanderbeg ! ”

It was thus Iskander came  
Once more unto his own ;  
And the tidings, like the flame  
Of a conflagration blown  
By the winds of summer, ran,  
Till the land was in a blaze,  
And the cities far and near,  
Sayeth Ben Joshua Ben Meir,  
In his Book of the Words of the Days,  
“ Were taken as a man  
Would take the tip of his ear.”

## INTERLUDE.

“ Now that is after my own heart,”  
The Poet cried ; “ one understands  
Your swarthy hero Scanderbeg,  
Gauntlet on hand and boot on leg,  
And skilled in every warlike art,  
Riding through his Albanian lands,  
And following the auspicious star  
That shone for him o’er Ak-Hissar.”

The Theologian added here  
His word of praise not less sincere,  
Although he ended with a jibe ;  
“ The hero of romance and song  
Was born,” he said, “ to right the wrong ;



And I approve ; but all the same  
That bit of treason with the Scribe  
Adds nothing to your hero's fame."

The Student praised the good old times,  
And liked the canter of the rhymes,  
That had a hoofbeat in their sound ;  
But longed some further word to hear  
Of the old chronicler Ben Meir,  
And where his volume might be found.  
The tall Musician walked the room  
With folded arms and gleaming eyes,  
As if he saw the Vikings rise,  
Gigantic shadows in the gloom ;  
And much he talked of their emprise,  
And meteors seen in Northern skies,  
And Heimdal's horn, and day of doom.  
But the Sicilian laughed again ;  
" This is the time to laugh," he said,  
For the whole story he well knew  
Was an invention of the Jew,

Spun from the cobwebs in his brain,  
And of the same bright scarlet thread  
As was the Tale of Kambalu.

Only the Landlord spake nò word ;  
’T was doubtful whether he had heard  
The tale at all, so full of care  
Was he of his impending fate,  
That, like the sword of Damocles,  
Above his head hung blank and bare,  
Suspended by a single hair,  
So that he could not sit at ease,  
But sighed and looked disconsolate,  
And shifted restless in his chair,  
Revolving how he might evade  
The blow of the descending blade.

The Student came to his relief  
By saying in his easy way  
To the Musician : “ Calm your grief,

My fair Apollo of the North,  
Balder the Beautiful and so forth ;  
Although your magic lyre or lute  
With broken strings is lying mute,  
Still you can tell some doleful tale  
Of shipwreck in a midnight gale,  
Or something of the kind to suit  
The mood that we are in to-night  
For what is marvellous and strange ;  
So give your nimble fancy range,  
And we will follow in its flight."

But the Musician shook his head ;  
" No tale I tell to-night," he said,  
" While my poor instrument lies there,  
Even as a child with vacant stare  
Lies in its little coffin dead."

Yet, being urged, he said at last :  
" There comes to me out of the Past

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A voice, whose tones are sweet and wild,  
Singing a song almost divine,  
And with a tear in every line ;  
An ancient ballad, that my nurse  
Sang to me when I was a child,  
In accents tender as the verse ;  
And sometimes wept, and sometimes smiled  
While singing it, to see arise  
The look of wonder in my eyes,  
And feel my heart with terror beat.  
This simple ballad I retain  
Clearly imprinted on my brain,  
And as a tale will now repeat."

## THE MUSICIAN'S TALE.

### THE MOTHER'S GHOST.

SVEND DYRING he rideth adown the glade ;

*I myself was young !*

There he hath wooed him so winsome a maid ;

*Fair words gladden so many a heart.*

Together were they for seven years,

And together children six were theirs.

Then came Death abroad through the land,

And blighted the beautiful lily-wand.

Svend Dyring he rideth adown the glade,

And again hath he wooed him another maid.

He hath wooed him a maid and brought home  
a bride,  
But she was bitter and full of pride.

When she came driving into the yard,  
There stood the six children weeping so hard.

There stood the small children with sorrowful  
heart ;  
From before her feet she thrust them apart. '

She gave to them neither ale nor bread ;  
“ Ye shall suffer hunger and hate,” she said.

She took from them their quilts of blue,  
And said : “ Ye shall lie on the straw we strew.”

She took from them the great waxlight ;  
“ Now ye shall lie in the dark at night.”

In the evening late they cried with cold ;  
The mother heard it under the mould.

The woman heard it the earth below :  
“ To my little children I must go.”

She standeth before the Lord of all :  
“ And may I go to my children small ? ”

She prayed him so long, and would not cease,  
Until he bade her depart in peace.

“ At cock-crow thou shalt return again ;  
Longer thou shalt not there remain ! ”

She girded up her sorrowful bones,  
And rifted the walls and the marble stones.

As through the village she flitted by,  
The watch-dogs howled aloud to the sky.

When she came to the castle gate,  
There stood her eldest daughter in wait.

“ Why standest thou here, dear daughter mine ?  
How fares it with brothers and sisters thine ? ”

“ Never art thou mother of mine,  
For my mother was both fair and fine.

“ My mother was white, with cheeks of red,  
But thou art pale, and like to the dead.”

“ How should I be fair and fine ?  
I have been dead ; pale cheeks are mine.

“ How should I be white and red,  
So long, so long have I been dead ? ”

When she came in at the chamber door,  
There stood the small children weeping sore.



One she braided, another she brushed,  
The third she lifted, the fourth she hushed.

The fifth she took on her lap and pressed,  
As if she would suckle it at her breast.

Then to her eldest daughter said she,  
“Do thou bid Svend Dyring come hither to me.”

Into the chamber when he came  
She spake to him in anger and shame.

“I left behind me both ale and bread;  
My children hunger and are not fed.

“I left behind me quilts of blue;  
My children lie on the straw ye strew.

“I left behind me the great waxlight;  
My children lie in the dark at night.

“ If I come again unto your hall,  
As cruel a fate shall you befall !

“ Now crows the cock with feathers red ;  
Back to the earth must all the dead.

“ Now crows the cock with feathers swart ;  
The gates of heaven fly wide apart.

“ Now crows the cock with feathers white ;  
I can abide no longer to-night.”

Whenever they heard the watch-dogs wail,  
They gave the children bread and ale.

Whenever they heard the watch-dogs bay,  
They feared lest the dead were on their way.

Whenever they heard the watch-dogs bark ;  
*I myself was young !*

They feared the dead out there in the dark.  
*Fair words gladden so many a heart.*

## INTERLUDE.

TOUCHED by the pathos of these rhymes,  
The Theologian said : " All praise  
Be to the ballads of old times  
And to the bards of simple ways,  
Who walked with Nature hand in hand,  
Whose country was their Holy Land,  
Whose singing robes were homespun brown  
From looms of their own native town,  
Which they were not ashamed to wear,  
And not of silk or sendal gay,  
Nor decked with fanciful array  
Of cockle-shells from Outre-Mer."

To whom the student answered : " Yes ;  
All praise and honor ! I confess

That bread and ale, home-baked, home-brewed,  
Are wholesome and nutritious food,  
But not enough for all our needs ;  
Poets — the best of them — are birds  
Of passage ; where their instinct leads  
They range abroad for thoughts and words,  
And from all climes bring home the seeds  
That germinate in flowers or weeds.  
They are not fowls in barnyards born  
To cackle o'er a grain of corn ;  
And, if you shut the horizon down  
To the small limits of their town,  
What do you but degrade your bard  
Till he at last becomes as one  
Who thinks the all-encircling sun  
Rises and sets in his back yard ? ”

The Theologian said again :

“ It may be so ; yet I maintain  
That what is native still is best,

And little care I for the rest.  
'T is a long story ; time would fail  
To tell it, and the hour is late ;  
We will not waste it in debate,  
But listen to our Landlord's tale."

And thus the sword of Damocles  
Descending not by slow degrees,  
But suddenly, on the Landlord fell,  
Who blushing, and with much demur  
And many vain apologies,  
Plucking up heart, began to tell  
The Rhyme of one Sir Christopher.

## THE LANDLORD'S TALE.

### THE RHYME OF SIR CHRISTOPHER.

It was Sir Christopher Gardiner,  
Knight of the Holy Sepulchre,  
From Merry England over the sea,  
Who stepped upon this continent  
As if his august presence lent  
A glory to the colony.

You should have seen him in the street  
Of the little Boston of Winthrop's time,  
His rapier dangling at his feet,  
Doublet and hose and boots complete,  
Prince Rupert hat with ostrich plume,  
Gloves that exhaled a faint perfume,  
Luxuriant curls and air sublime,  
And superior manners now obsolete!

He had a way of saying things  
That made one think of courts and kings,  
And lords and ladies of high degree ;  
So that not having been at court  
Seemed something very little short  
Of treason or lese-majesty,  
Such an accomplished knight was he.

His dwelling was just beyond the town,  
At what he called his country-seat ;  
For, careless of Fortune's smile or frown,  
And weary grown of the world and its ways,  
He wished to pass the rest of his days  
In a private life and a calm retreat.

But a double life was the life he led,  
And, while professing to be in search  
Of a godly course, and willing, he said,  
Nay, anxious to join the Puritan church,  
He made of all this but small account,

And passed his idle hours instead  
With roystering Morton of Merry Mount,  
That pettifogger from Furnival's Inn,  
Lord of misrule and riot and sin,  
Who looked on the wine when it was red.

This country-seat was little more  
Than a cabin of logs ; but in front of the door  
A modest flower-bed thickly sown  
With sweet alyssum and columbine  
Made those who saw it at once divine  
The touch of some other hand than his own.  
And first it was whispered, and then it was  
known,  
That he in secret was harboring there  
A little lady with golden hair,  
Whom he called his cousin, but whom he had  
wed  
In the Italian manner, as men said,  
And great was the scandal everywhere.



But worse than this was the vague surmise,  
Though none could vouch for it or aver,  
That the Knight of the Holy Sepulchre  
Was only a Papist in disguise ;  
And the more to embitter their bitter lives,  
And the more to trouble the public mind,  
Came letters from England, from two other  
wives,  
Whom he had carelessly left behind ;  
Both of them letters of such a kind  
As made the governor hold his breath ;  
The one imploring him straight to send  
The husband home, that he might amend ;  
The other asking his instant death,  
As the only way to make an end.

The wary governor deemed it right,  
When all this wickedness was revealed,  
To send his warrant signed and sealed,  
And take the body of the knight.

Armed with this mighty instrument,  
The marshal, mounting his gallant steed,  
Rode forth from town at the top of his speed,  
And followed by all his bailiffs bold,  
As if on high achievement bent,  
To storm some castle or stronghold,  
Challenge the warders on the wall,  
And seize in his ancestral hall  
A robber-baron grim and old.

But when through all the dust and heat  
He came to Sir Christopher's country-seat,  
No knight he found, nor warder there,  
But the little lady with golden hair,  
Who was gathering in the bright sunshine  
The sweet alyssum and columbine ;  
While gallant Sir Christopher, all so gay,  
Being forewarned, through the postern gate  
Of his castle wall had tripped away,  
And was keeping a little holiday  
In the forests, that bounded his estate.

Then as a trusty squire and true  
The marshal searched the castle through,  
Not crediting what the lady said ;  
Searched from cellar to garret in vain,  
And, finding no knight, came out again  
And arrested the golden damsel instead,  
And bore her in triumph into the town,  
While from her eyes the tears rolled down  
On the sweet alyssum and columbine,  
That she held in her fingers white and fine.

The governor's heart was moved to see  
So fair a creature caught within  
The snares of Satan and of sin,  
And read her a little homily  
On the folly and wickedness of the lives  
Of women, half cousins and half wives ;  
But, seeing that naught his words availed,  
He sent her away in a ship that sailed  
For Merry England over the sea,

To the other two wives in the old countree,  
To search her further, since he had failed  
To come at the heart of the mystery.

Meanwhile Sir Christopher wandered away  
Through pathless woods for a month and a day,  
Shooting pigeons, and sleeping at night  
With the noble savage, who took delight  
In his feathered hat and his velvet vest.  
His gun and his rapier and the rest.  
But as soon as the noble savage heard  
That a bounty was offered for this gay bird,  
He wanted to slay him out of hand,  
And bring in his beautiful scalp for a show,  
Like the glossy head of a kite or crow,  
Until he was made to understand  
They wanted the bird alive, not dead ;  
Then he followed him whithersoever he fled,  
Through forest and field, and hunted him down,  
And brought him prisoner into the town.

Alas ! it was a rueful sight,  
To see this melancholy knight  
In such a dismal and hapless case ;  
His hat deformed by stain and dent,  
His plumage broken, his doublet rent,  
His beard and flowing locks forlorn,  
Matted, dishevelled, and unshorn,  
His boots with dust and mire besprent ;  
But dignified in his disgrace,  
And wearing an unblushing face.  
And thus before the magistrate  
He stood to hear the doom of fate.  
In vain he strove with wonted ease  
To modify and extenuate  
His evil deeds in church and state,  
For gone was now his power to please ;  
And his pompous words had no more weight  
Than feathers flying in the breeze.

With suavity equal to his own  
The governor lent a patient ear

To the speech evasive and highflown,  
In which he endeavored to make clear  
That colonial laws were too severe  
When applied to a gallant cavalier,  
A gentleman born, and so well known,  
And accustomed to move in a higher sphere.

All this the Puritan governor heard,  
And deigned in answer never a word ;  
But in summary manner shipped away  
In a vessel that sailed from Salem bay,  
This splendid and famous cavalier,  
With his Rupert hat and his popery,  
To Merry England over the sea,  
As being unmeet to inhabit here.

Thus endeth the Rhyme of Sir Christopher,  
Knight of the Holy Sepulchre,  
The first who furnished this barren land  
With apples of Sodom and ropes of sand.

## FINALE.

THESE are the tales those merry guests  
Told to each other, well or ill ;  
Like summer birds that lift their crests  
Above the borders of their nests  
And twitter, and again are still.

These are the tales, or new or old,  
In idle moments idly told ;  
Flowers of the field with petals thin,  
Lilies that neither toil nor spin,  
And tufts of wayside weeds and gorse  
Hung in the parlor of the inn  
Beneath the sign of the Red Horse.

And still, reluctant to retire,  
The friends sat talking by the fire

And watched the smouldering embers burn  
To ashes, and flash up again  
Into a momentary glow,  
Lingering like them when forced to go,  
And going when they would remain ;  
For on the morrow they must turn  
Their faces homeward, and the pain  
Of parting touched with its unrest  
A tender nerve in every breast.

But sleep at last the victory won ;  
They must be stirring with the sun,  
And drowsily good night they said,  
And went still gossiping to bed,  
And left the parlor wrapped in gloom.  
The only live thing in the room  
Was the old clock, that in its pace  
Kept time with the revolving spheres  
And constellations in their flight,  
And struck with its uplifted mace



The dark, unconscious hours of night,  
To senseless and unlistening ears.

Uprose the sun ; and every guest,  
Uprisen, was soon equipped and dressed  
For journeying home and city-ward ;  
The old stage-coach was at the door,  
With horses harnessed, long before  
The sunshine reached the withered sward  
Beneath the oaks, whose branches hoar  
Murmured : “ Farewell forevermore.”

“ Farewell ! ” the portly Landlord cried ;  
“ Farewell ! ” the parting guests replied,  
But little thought that nevermore  
Their feet would pass that threshold o’er ;  
That nevermore together there  
Would they assemble, free from care,  
To hear the oaks’ mysterious roar,  
And breathe the wholesome country air.

Where are they now ? What lands and skies  
Paint pictures in their friendly eyes ?  
What hope deludes, what promise cheers,  
What pleasant voices fill their ears ?  
Two are beyond the salt sea waves,  
And three already in their graves.  
Perchance the living still may look  
Into the pages of this book,  
And see the days of long ago  
Floating and fleeting to and fro,  
As in the well-remembered brook  
They saw the inverted landscape gleam,  
And their own faces like a dream  
Look up upon them from below.

# BIRDS OF PASSAGE.



FLIGHT THE THIRD.



## FATA MORGANA.

O SWEET illusions of Song,  
That tempt me everywhere,  
In the lonely fields, and the throng  
Of the crowded thoroughfare !

I approach, and ye vanish away,  
I grasp you, and ye are gone ;  
But ever by night and by day,  
The melody soundeth on.

As the weary traveller sees  
In desert or prairie vast,  
Blue lakes, overhung with trees,  
That a pleasant shadow cast ;

Fair towns with turrets high,  
And shining roofs of gold,  
That vanish as he draws nigh,  
Like mists together rolled, —

So I wander and wander along,  
And forever before me gleams  
The shining city of song,  
In the beautiful land of dreams.

But when I would enter the gate  
Of that golden atmosphere,  
It is gone, and I wander and wait  
For the vision to reappear.

## THE HAUNTED CHAMBER.

EACH heart has its haunted chamber,  
Where the silent moonlight falls !  
On the floor are mysterious footsteps,  
There are whispers along the walls !

And mine at times is haunted  
By phantoms of the Past,  
As motionless as shadows  
By the silent moonlight cast.

A form sits by the window,  
That is not seen by day,  
For as soon as the dawn approaches  
It vanishes away.

It sits there in the moonlight,  
Itself as pale and still,  
And points with its airy finger  
Across the window-sill.

Without, before the window,  
There stands a gloomy pine,  
Whose boughs wave upward and downward  
As wave these thoughts of mine.

And underneath its branches  
Is the grave of a little child,  
Who died upon life's threshold,  
And never wept nor smiled.

What are ye, O pallid phantoms !  
That haunt my troubled brain ?  
That vanish when day approaches,  
And at night return again ?



What are ye, O pallid phantoms !

But the statues without breath,  
That stand on the bridge overarching  
The silent river of death ?

## THE MEETING.

AFTER so long an absence

At last we meet again :

Does the meeting give us pleasure,

Or does it give us pain ?

The tree of life has been shaken,

And but few of us linger now,

Like the Prophet's two or three berries

In the top of the uppermost bough.

We cordially greet each other

In the old, familiar tone ;

And we think, though we do not say it,

How old and gray he is grown !

We speak of a Merry Christmas  
And many a Happy New Year ;  
But each in his heart is thinking  
Of those that are not here.

We speak of friends and their fortunes,  
And of what they did and said,  
Till the dead alone seem living,  
And the living alone seem dead.

And at last we hardly distinguish  
Between the ghosts and the guests ;  
And a mist and shadow of sadness  
Steals over our merriest jests.

## VOX POPULI.

WHEN Mazárvan the Magician,  
Journeyed westward through Cathay,  
Nothing heard he but the praises  
Of Badoura on his way.

But the lessening rumor ended  
When he came to Khaledan,  
There the folk were talking only  
Of Prince Camaralzaman.

So it happens with the poets :  
Every province hath its own ;  
Camaralzaman is famous  
Where Badoura is unknown.

## THE CASTLE-BUILDER.

A GENTLE boy, with soft and silken locks,  
A dreamy boy, with brown and tender eyes,  
A castle-builder, with his wooden blocks,  
And towers that touch imaginary skies.

A fearless rider on his father's knee,  
An eager listener unto stories told  
At the Round Table of the nursery,  
Of heroes and adventures manifold.

There will be other towers for thee to build ;  
There will be other steeds for thee to ride ;  
There will be other legends, and all filled  
With greater marvels and more glorified.

Build on, and make thy castles high and fair,  
Rising and reaching upward to the skies ;  
Listen to voices in the upper air,  
Nor lose thy simple faith in mysteries.

## CHANGED.

FROM the outskirts of the town,  
Where of old the mile-stone stood,  
Now a stranger, looking down  
I behold the shadowy crown  
Of the dark and haunted wood.

Is it changed, or am I changed ?  
Ah ! the oaks are fresh and green,  
But the friends with whom I ranged  
Through their thickets are estranged  
By the years that intervene.

Bright as ever flows the sea,  
Bright as ever shines the sun,  
But alas ! they seem to me  
Not the sun that used to be,  
Not the tides that used to run.

## THE CHALLENGE.

I HAVE a vague remembrance  
Of a story, that is told  
In some ancient Spanish legend  
Or chronicle of old.

It was when brave King Sanchez  
Was before Zamora slain,  
And his great besieging army  
Lay encamped upon the plain.

Don Diego de Ordoñez  
Sallied forth in front of all,  
And shouted loud his challenge  
To the warders on the wall.



All the people of Zamora,  
Both the born and the unborn,  
As traitors did he challenge  
With taunting words of scorn.

The living, in their houses,  
And in their graves, the dead!  
And the waters of their rivers,  
And their wine, and oil, and bread!

There is a greater army,  
That besets us round with strife,  
A starving, numberless army,  
At all the gates of life.

The poverty-stricken millions  
Who challenge our wine and bread,  
And impeach us all as traitors,  
Both the living and the dead.

And whenever I sit at the banquet,  
Where the feast and song are high,  
Amid the mirth and the music  
I can hear that fearful cry.

And hollow and haggard faces  
Look into the lighted hall,  
And wasted hands are extended  
To catch the crumbs that fall.

For within there is light and plenty,  
And odors fill the air ;  
But without there is cold and darkness,  
And hunger and despair.

And there in the camp of famine,  
In wind and cold and rain,  
Christ, the great Lord of the army,  
Lies dead upon the plain !

## THE BROOK AND THE WAVE.

THE brooklet came from the mountain,  
As sang the bard of old,  
Running with feet of silver  
Over the sands of gold !

Far away in the briny ocean  
There rolled a turbulent wave,  
Now singing along the sea-beach,  
Now howling along the cave.

And the brooklet has found the billow,  
Though they flowed so far apart,  
And has filled with its freshness and sweetness  
That turbulent, bitter heart !

FROM THE SPANISH CANCIONEROS.

1.

EYES so tristful, eyes so tristful,  
Heart so full of care and cumber,  
I was lapped in rest and slumber,  
Ye have made me wakeful, wistful !

In this life of labor endless  
Who shall comfort my distresses ?  
Querulous my soul and friendless  
In its sorrow shuns caresses.  
Ye have made me, ye have made me  
Querulous of you, that care not,  
Eyes so tristful, yet I dare not  
Say to what ye have betrayed me.

## 2.

Some day, some day,  
O troubled breast,  
Shalt thou find rest.

If Love in thee  
To grief give birth,  
Six feet of earth  
Can more than he ;  
There calm and free  
And unoppressed  
Shalt thou find rest.

The unattained  
In life at last,  
When life is passed,  
Shall all be gained ;  
And no more pained,  
No more distressed,  
Shalt thou find rest.

## 3.

Come, O Death, so silent flying  
That unheard thy coming be,  
Lest the sweet delight of dying  
Bring life back again to me.

For thy sure approach perceiving  
In my constancy and pain  
I new life should win again,  
Thinking that I am not living.  
So to me, unconscious lying,  
All unknown thy coming be,  
Lest the sweet delight of dying  
Bring life back again to me.

Unto him who finds thee hateful,  
Death, thou art inhuman pain ;  
But to me, who dying gain,  
Life is but a task ungrateful.  
Come, then, with my wish complying,

All unheard thy coming be,  
Lest the sweet delight of dying  
Bring life back again to me.

## 4.

Glove of black in white hand bare,  
And about her forehead pale  
Wound a thin, transparent veil,  
That doth not conceal her hair ;  
Sovereign attitude and air,  
Cheek and neck alike displayed,  
With coquettish charms arrayed,  
Laughing eyes and fugitive ;—  
This is killing men that live,  
'T is not mourning for the dead.

## AFTERMATH.

WHEN the Summer fields are mown,  
When the birds are fledged and flown,  
    And the dry leaves strew the path ;  
With the falling of the snow,  
With the cawing of the crow,  
Once again the fields we mow  
    And gather in the aftermath.

Not the sweet, new grass with flowers  
Is this harvesting of ours ;  
    Not the upland clover bloom ;  
But the rowen mixed with weeds,  
Tangled tufts from marsh and meads,  
Where the poppy drops its seeds  
    In the silence and the gloom.













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